

# Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 11 January 1990

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## Novembers balance of payments

There was a four per cent rise in Australia's seasonally adjusted current account deficit in November.

Preliminary November balance of payments figures, released while *Statistics Weekly* was in recess over Christmas, showed total merchandise exports were down \$23 million or one per cent, seasonally adjusted, despite a stronger export performance by the manufacturing sector.

With imports remaining virtually unchanged, the decrease in exports, together with an increased outflow for net services, were chiefly responsible for the seasonally adjusted deficit on current account increasing by \$71 million to \$1,757 million for the month.

Seasonal factors had a major influence on the end result for the current account in November. The data before adjustment for such factors had shown a 30 per cent fall in the current account deficit, with exports up five per cent and imports down four per cent.

The biggest increases in exports were in manufactured goods, gold, cereals and mineral fuels (other than coal and its derivatives). The rise in cereal exports was mainly due to a recovery by wheat from a low October figure.

Wool exports, however, fell by \$128 million or 36 per cent in the month. Wool exports were at little more than one-third of the high levels of a year earlier.

Coal exports also fell significantly, but by a much lesser amount.

The four per cent fall in imports was mainly due to a drop in transport equipment (down \$236 million).

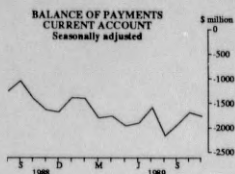
### BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, CURRENT ACCOUNT

\$ million

	October 1989		November 1989	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Original	Seasonally adjusted
Balance on current account	-2,270	-1,686	-1,578	-1,757
Balance on merchandise trade	-758	-256	-334	-286
Net services	-448	-378	-371	-469
Net income	-1,268	-1,230	-1,058	-1,158
Net unrequited transfers	204	178	185	156

On the capital account, official sector transactions recorded an outflow of \$1,037 million after an inflow of more than \$650 million in the previous month. Transactions in general government borrowing and an increased outflow on official reserve assets were responsible for the turnaround.

For further information, order the publication *Balance of Payments, Australia* (5301.0) or contact either Daniel Aherne on (062) 52 6689 or Peter Bradbury on (062) 52 5540.



## Manufacturing: the scorecard for November

Up 14

Down 10

Fourteen of the twenty-four seasonally adjusted categories covered by the monthly survey of manufacturing production showed rises in November.

The largest percentage increases in monthly output came in wool yarn (19.5%), wool woven fabric (15.8%) and beer (16.4%).

The major falls occurred in the production of television sets (21.6%), blooms and slabs (14.5%) and confectionery (chocolate-based 12.0%, other 11.0%).

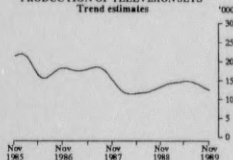
### PRODUCTION OF COMMODITIES RECORDING SIGNIFICANT MONTHLY CHANGE NOVEMBER 1989 Seasonally adjusted

Commodity	Unit	Production in November 1989	Percentage change from previous month
<i>Increase</i>			
Wool yarn	tonnes	1,781	19.5
Beer	m litres	186	16.4
Wool woven fabric	'000 sq m	680	15.8
<i>Decrease</i>			
Television sets	'000	10.8	-21.6
Blooms and slabs	'000 tonnes	194	-14.5
Confectionery—			
Chocolate-based	tonnes	8,415	-12.0
Other	tonnes	4,855	-11.0

Ten of the twenty-five categories for which original data are available for both November 1988 and November 1989 showed increases over the twelve months while the remaining fifteen recorded falls.

For further information, order the publication *Production Statistics, Australia, Preliminary (8301.0)* or contact Tony Hunt on (062) 52 5558.

PRODUCTION OF TELEVISION SETS  
Trend estimates



## Lower cost increases return to building industry

Cost inflation in the building industry has resumed its trend downwards from a peak in October 1988.

Prices for house building materials increased by just 0.5 per cent in October 1989, while those for materials used in building other than house building went up by 0.6 per cent.

The annual rate of increase fell to 8.7 per cent in the house-building industry, and to 8.4 per cent in the rest of the building industry. In both cases, recent brief departures from the downward trend were reversed.

On a city-by-city basis, there were variations between the different sectors of the industry. In house building, as in previous months over the last year, Sydney and Perth recorded annual rates of increase well above the average (although Sydney's rate dropped significantly in October) while Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart recorded rates below the average.

PRICES OF MATERIALS USED IN HOUSE BUILDING, OCTOBER 1989

Percentage change

City	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.4	9.6
Melbourne	0.5	6.9
Brisbane	0.6	8.7
Adelaide	0.8	8.4
Perth	0.8	11.9
Hobart	1.1	7.5
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.5	8.7
Canberra	0.4	8.1

In the non-housing part of the industry, only Brisbane recorded an annual rate of increase significantly above the national average.

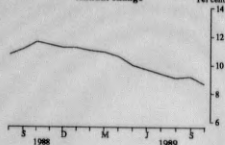
PRICES OF NON-DWELLING BUILDING MATERIALS, OCTOBER 1989

Percentage change

City	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.7	8.2
Melbourne	0.4	8.5
Brisbane	0.8	10.2
Adelaide	0.3	7.6
Perth	0.5	8.5
Hobart	0.6	6.4
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.6	8.4
Darwin	0.4	6.8
Canberra	0.5	8.6

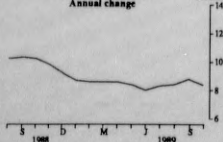
HOUSE BUILDING MATERIAL PRICES

Annual change



PRICES OF NON-DWELLING BUILDING MATERIALS

Annual change



For non-housing builders, the main price increases in October were for a range of steel products, following recent rises in the price of steel itself, while ready mixed concrete, elevators and escalators also recorded significant increases in most cities.

In the house-building industry, the steel price rises had their effect on such materials as metal sheet, fascia and guttering, while paint prices also increased in all cities.

For further information, order the publication *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra* (6408.0) and the publication *Price Index of Materials used in Building other than House Building, Eight Capital Cities* (6407.0) or contact Peter Sturgeon on (062) 52 6198.

## Small increase in prices of manufacturing inputs

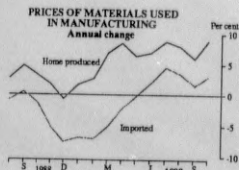
Prices of materials used in manufacturing industry increased by 0.1 per cent in October, following falls in the previous two months.

Despite these recent low figures, the annual rate of increase in October rose to 6.7 per cent, sharply up on the 4.3 per cent recorded in September. (This is because a large monthly fall of 2.1 per cent occurred in October 1988.)

The main price increase for manufacturers in October was for crude petroleum.

The main price decrease was for cattle, sheep and lambs where seasonal factors resulted in increased domestic supply and lower prices. Prices for live animal inputs have declined significantly in each month since July.

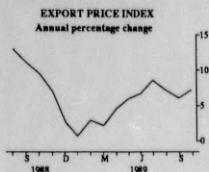
The table below shows the price movements of imported and home produced materials used in manufacturing.



PRICES OF MATERIALS USED IN MANUFACTURING, OCTOBER 1989  
Percentage change

Source of material	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Imported	-0.2	3.0
Home produced	0.3	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>6.7</b>

For further information, order the publication *Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia* (6411.0) or contact Kevin Norton on (062) 52 5637.



## Export prices steady

Export prices were, on average, unchanged in October as increases and decreases for individual items offset each other.

The annual percentage price change, however, rose from 6.1 per cent to 7.2 per cent due to a fall in prices between the months of September and October in 1988.

Approximately 43 per cent of the items recorded price rises in October, while about 38 per cent recorded price falls. Most of the price movements were not significant.

The more significant price movements were for:

- ☐ sugar — increased prices due to fluctuations in world prices;
- ☐ beef — increased prices due to stronger demand; and
- ☐ nickel — decreased prices reflecting short term fluctuations in world markets.

**EXPORT PRICES, OCTOBER 1989**  
Percentage change

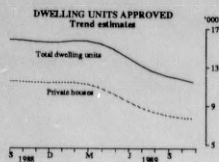
Commodity	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Food and live animals	0.9	14.9
Crude materials	-0.8	2.7
Mineral fuels	0.8	16.3
Animal and vegetable oils	3.5	-18.8
Chemicals and other manufactured exports	-0.6	2.7
<i>All exports</i>	—	7.2

For further information, order the publication *Export Price Index, Australia* (6405.0) or contact Peter Cordy on (062) 52 5541.

## Mixed news for builders from November approvals

The number of dwelling units approved for construction in November rose by two per cent in seasonally adjusted terms to 11,960.

Within this figure, the number of private sector houses approved fell by 8.1 per cent, whilst the number of public sector houses and public and private sector other dwelling units (e.g. town houses, duplexes and apartment buildings) increased significantly.



The recent steep declines in the ABS trend estimates for both private sector houses and total dwelling units are showing signs of a possible levelling-off.

**DWELLING UNITS APPROVED, NOVEMBER 1989**

	Private sector houses		Total dwelling units	
	No.	Percentage change on previous month	No.	Percentage change on previous month
Original	8,580	-2.2	13,235	6.1
Seasonally adjusted	7,702	-8.1	11,960	2.0
Trend estimate	7,703	-1.5	11,488	-2.0

The value of non-residential buildings approved, after enjoying three months of strong growth to October, declined by a hefty 15.6 per cent in November.

A big decline in approvals for private sector offices, from \$536 million worth in October to \$125 million in November, was a key feature of the non-residential figures, where there were significant declines in approvals in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

*For further information, order the publication Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) or contact Paul Seville on (062) 52 6067.*

## Prices of manufactured goods again record small rise

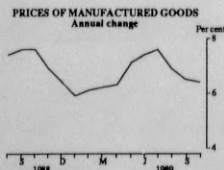
Prices of manufactured goods rose by 0.5 per cent in October, following an increase of 0.3 per cent in September.

The successive small increase resulted in the annual rate of increase falling to 6.4 per cent, the lowest level since April 1989.

At the same time, input cost pressures on manufacturing industries remained low (see article on page 5).

No individual price movements were significant in the month, with many small increases being largely offset by a number of decreases.

The table below shows that price movements in the various sectors of manufacturing have differed significantly over the last year, with the largest increase being for food and beverages (7.8%).





**PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, OCTOBER 1989**  
Percentage change

<i>Manufacturing Sector</i>	<i>From previous month</i>	<i>From corresponding month of previous year</i>
Food and beverages	1.0	7.8
Clothing and footwear	0.1	7.5
Chemicals and petroleum	0.6	6.5
Basic metal products	-0.3	7.7
Fabricated metal products	0.3	6.5
Transport equipment	-0.1	5.3
Other industrial machinery	0.1	4.5
<i>All manufacturing industry</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>6.4</i>

For further information, order the publication *Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia* (6412.0) or contact Peter Cordy on (062) 52 5541.

## Manufacturing industries contract slightly in September quarter

The constant price value of manufacturing industry production fell by 1.5 per cent in the September quarter 1989.

Despite this slight contraction, however, the seasonally adjusted index of manufacturing production at average 1984-85 prices increased by 6.8 per cent between the September quarters of 1988 and 1989.

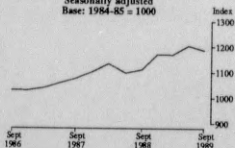
Eight of the twelve industry subdivisions of manufacturing recorded falls in the index for the September quarter, the largest fall (down 11.7%) occurring in the transport equipment industry.

Other industries recording reasonably large falls in the quarter were textiles and fabricated metal products (both down 8.0%) and the chemical, petroleum and coal products industry (down 6.0%). The non-metallic mineral products industry recorded the largest rise (up 6.1%).

Since the September quarter 1988, significant growth in the index was recorded for basic metal products (up 17.5%), miscellaneous manufacturing (up 10.3%), 'other machinery and equipment' (up 10.2%), and paper, printing and publishing (up 9.6%). There were no significant falls over the period.

For further information, order the publication *Quarterly Indexes of Manufacturing Production, Australia* (8219.0) or contact Alan Tryde on (062) 52 6801.

MANUFACTURING PRODUCTION INDEX  
Seasonally adjusted  
Base: 1984-85 = 1000





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## All the releases: 20 December 1989 to 9 January 1990

### General

Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., December 1989 (1304.0; \$16.00)  
 Statistics Weekly, 21 December 1989 (1318.0; \$3.50)  
 Monthly Summary of Statistics, NSW, December 1989 (1305.1; \$11.50)  
 Economic Indicators, NSW, December 1989 (1307.1; \$3.00)  
 Monthly Summary of Statistics, Vic., December 1989 (1303.2; \$7.50)  
 Economic Indicators, Vic., December Qtr 1989 (1307.2; \$7.50)  
 Monthly Business Indicators, Vic., December 1989 (1308.2; \$3.00)  
 Monthly Summary of Statistics, Qld, December 1989 (1304.3; \$7.50)  
 Queensland at a Glance, 1990 (1312.3; free)  
 Monthly Summary of Statistics, WA, December 1989 (1305.5; \$7.50)  
 Monthly Summary of Statistics, SA, December 1989 (1303.4; \$7.50)

### Census of Population and Housing

1986 Census of population and Housing, Perth...a social atlas — Part 4 Dwelling Characteristics (2504.5; \$6.00) — *new issue*

### Demography

Perinatal Deaths, NSW, 1988 (3303.1; \$7.00)

### Social statistics

Schools, Aust., 1989, Preliminary (4220.0; \$4.50) (*Previously: National Schools Statistics Collection, Aust., Preliminary*)  
 Inpatient Separations from Recognised Hospitals, SA, 1988 (4308.4; \$10.50)

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Australian National Accounts: Input-Output Tables, 1983-84 (5209.0; \$40.00)  
 Australian National Accounts: Input-Output Tables (Commodity Details), 1983-84 (5215.0; \$40.00)  
 Balance of Payments, Aust., November 1989 (5301.0; \$10.00)  
 Balance of Payments, Aust., 1987-88 (5303.0; \$20.00)  
 International Transportation Services, Aust., March Qtr 1989 (5350.0; \$7.50) — *final issue*  
 Customs and Excise Revenue, Aust., December Qtr 1988 (5425.0; \$7.50) — *final issue*  
 Private New Capital Expenditure, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (5626.0; \$8.50)  
 Stocks, Manufacturers' Sales, September Quarter 1989 and Expected Sales to June 1990, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (5629.0; \$8.00)  
 Cash Management Trusts, Aust., November 1989 (5635.0; \$3.00)  
 Building Societies, Aust. (5637.0; \$8.00)  
 Authorised Dealers and Money Market Corporations, Aust., October 1989 (5638.0; \$8.00)  
 Finance Companies, Aust., October 1989 (5639.0; \$7.50)  
 Credit Co-operatives, General Financials and Other Financial Corporations, Aust., October 1989 (5640.0; \$11.50)  
 Personal Finance, Aust., October 1989 (5642.0; \$5.00)

### Labour statistics and prices

The Labour Force, Aust., November 1989 (6203.0; \$13.00)  
 Industrial Disputes, Aust., September 1989 (6321.0; \$5.00)  
 Trade Union Statistics, Aust., June 1989 (6323.0; \$5.00)  
 Export Price Index, Aust., October 1989 (6405.0; \$4.50)  
 Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, October 1989 (6407.0; \$8.00)  
 Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, October 1989 (6408.0; \$3.25)  
 Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Aust., October 1989 (6411.0; \$8.50)  
 Price Indexes of Articles Produced By Manufacturing Industry, Aust., October 1989 (6412.0; \$6.00)  
 Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., October 1989 (6415.0; \$5.00)

### Agriculture

Sheep Numbers, Shearing and Wool Production Forecast, Aust., 1989-90 (7211.0; \$3.00)  
 Livestock Products, Aust., November 1989 (7215.0; \$4.50)  
 Livestock and Livestock Products, Vic., 1988-89 (7221.2; \$15.00)

### Secondary industry and distribution

Quarterly Indexes of Manufacturing Production, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (8219.0; \$4.50)  
 Production Statistics, Aust., November 1989, Preliminary (8301.0; \$4.50)  
 Production of Fibres, Yarns, Fabrics, Bedding and Floor Coverings, Aust., August 1989 (8360.0; \$8.00)  
 Production of Energy Products, Aust., September 1989 (8368.0; \$3.50)  
 Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, November 1989 (8504.0; \$4.50)  
 Building Approvals, Aust., November 1989 (8731.0; \$8.50)

## Inquiries

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Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

The Editor  
*Statistics Weekly*  
 (062) 52 6917

Manufacturing in NSW, 1987-88 (8207.1; \$16.00)  
 Production Statistics, NSW, September 1989 (8304.1; \$4.50)  
 Tourist Accommodation: Major Hotels and Motels, NSW, November 1989 (8646.1; \$5.00)  
 Building Approvals, NSW, November 1989 (8731.1; \$8.60)  
 Building Approvals, Vic., November 1989 (8731.2; \$8.50)  
 Building Activity, Vic., September Qtr 1989 (8752.2; \$8.50)  
 Census of Manufacturing Establishments: Selected Items of Data Classified by  
 Industry and Employment Size, WA, 1987-88 (8203.5; \$7.50)  
 Tourist Accommodation (Preliminary), Three, Four and Five Star Hotels and  
 Motels, Perth Statistical Division, November 1989 (8646.5; \$5.00)  
 Building Approvals, WA, November 1989 (8731.5; \$8.00)  
 Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, WA,  
 October 1989 (8741.5; \$7.50)  
 Building Approvals, SA, November 1989 (8731.4; \$8.00)  
 Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, SA, June  
 1989, Preliminary (8740.4; \$3.00)

#### Transport

Motor Vehicle Registrations, Vic., November 1989 (9303.2; \$5.00)

## Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 23 January 1990

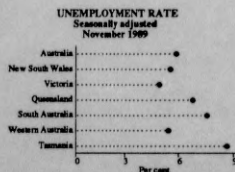
- 11** The Labour Force, Aust., December 1989, Preliminary (6202.0; \$8.50)  
 The Labour Force Aust. — Preliminary Data on Floppy Disk,  
 December 1989 (6271.0; \$60.00)  
 Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., November 1989,  
 Preliminary (9301.0; \$4.00)
- 17** Import Price Index, Aust., September Quarter 1989 (6414.0; \$4.00)
- 22** Retail Trade, Aust., November 1989 (8501.0; \$8.00)

## The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
 9 January 1990

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (June qtr 89)*	20.8	11.7	13.1	3.5	6.3	78.0	n.a.	n.a.	15.9
Retail turnover (Oct. 89) (trend estimate)	13.5	4.4	11.1	4.9	12.5	9.7	n.a.	6.2	9.6
New motor vehicle registrations (Oct. 89)*	9.5	3.0	14.7	2.0	-6.4	n.a.	12.0	74.3	7.7
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Nov. 89)	-22.9	-27.4	-21.9	0.6	-30.5	4.6	-14.2	-63.1	-22.8
Value of total building work done (June 89)	38.6	42.1	34.4	22.9	54.9	17.4	-8.5	-3.0	36.8
Employed persons (Nov. 89)*	4.2	4.7	7.7	2.5	4.0	6.4	7.4	5.9	4.8
Capital city consumer price index (Sept. qtr 89)	8.1	8.3	7.8	7.6	7.8	7.2	7.0	5.6	8.0
Average weekly earnings (full- time adult ordinary time) (August 89)	10.6	6.9	5.8	7.6	5.8	6.7	4.5	7.5	8.0
Population (June 89)	1.1	1.3	3.2	1.1	3.0	0.6	0.2	1.6	1.6
Room occupancy rates in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 89)	-3.5	-0.7	-12.6	1.5	3.5	4.5	0.9	-10.0	-3.9

\* Seasonally adjusted for States (but not Territories)



## Key national indicators – consolidated to 9 January 1990

				Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
				Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
				Period			
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 89	89,803	89,733	1.8	13.0
	— 1984-85 prices			63,334	63,732	0.7	5.4
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 89	7,152	7,413	0.0	20.2
	— 1984-85 prices			5,544	5,755	-1.8	18.3
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Three months to Dec. 89	8,494	n.a.	n.a.	11.3
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Oct. 89	6,720	6,789	-1.5	7.9
	— 1984-85 prices		Sept. qtr 89	14,280	14,788	0.9	5.0
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		No.	Oct. 89	51,184	51,995	-5.9	7.7
Dwelling unit approvals		"	Nov. 89	13,235	11,960	-2.0	-22.8
Value of all building approvals		\$m		2,363	2,159	-14.2	-5.5
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	June qtr 89	7,622	7,711	7.6	36.9
	— 1984-85 prices			5,138	5,198	4.7	21.1
Manufacturers' sales		"	June qtr 89	34,261	34,196	3.4	14.6
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Six months to Dec. 89	70,922	n.a.	n.a.	12.0
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons (e)		'000	Nov. 89	7,870.7	7,842.8	0.5	4.8
Unemployment rate † (e)		%	"	5.4	5.9	-0.1	-0.8
Participation rate † (e)		"	"	63.3	63.5	0.2	1.2
Job vacancies		'000	August 89	64.3	n.a.	-12.1	-2.3
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.5	n.a.	1.6	10.7
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		Sept. qtr 89	197.0	n.a.	2.3	8.0
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industry	1984-85 = 100.0		Oct. 89	117.8	n.a.	0.1	6.7
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1968-69 = 100.0		"	553.2	n.a.	0.5	6.4
Company profits before income tax		\$m	Sept. qtr 89	4,846	4,667	-3.6	14.1
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	August 89	508.40	n.a.	1.5	8.0
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		Nov. 89	18.20	n.a.	-0.2	3.2
10-year Treasury bonds †			"	13.10	n.a.	-0.5	0.8
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	Nov. 89	4,187	4,049	-0.6	15.8
Imports of merchandise		"	"	4,521	4,335	0.2	10.2
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	-334	-286	-11.7	34.3
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	-705	-755	-19.1	-11.5
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	-1,578	-1,757	-4.2	-7.5
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0		Sept. qtr 89	n.a.	108.2	-2.8	3.0
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt		\$m	30 Sept. 89	110,329	n.a.	1.9	14.7
Net foreign liabilities		"	"	147,716	n.a.	3.5	15.1
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
US\$	per \$A		Nov. 89	0.7826	n.a.	1.0	-7.9
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.8	n.a.	1.2	-2.3
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (estimated resident)		million	June 89	16.8	n.a.	0.4	1.6
Overseas visitors		'000	Oct. 89	174	165	-9.8	-15.2

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures released Thursday, 11 January 1990.  
NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 10). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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